

## Kansas Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

2016 – 2017 Project Proposal

Title of the Project	Funding Impacts on Educational Outcomes in Kansas
Problem to be Addressed	The impact of Kansas educational funding decisions on statewide educational outcomes.
Background <i>(include federal jurisdiction/protected classes)</i>	<p>In February, 2015 the New York Times ran the article, “Education Is Newest Target of Kansas Budget Cuts”. An excerpt follows:</p> <p>“KANSAS CITY, Kan. — In November, shortly after Gov. Sam Brownback won re-election, experts forecast that the state would bring in \$1 billion less than expected over the next two years. He responded by cutting state agency budgets and proposing the transfer of funds among various state accounts. In December came news of a revenue slump, falling to \$15.1 million below estimates. Mr. Brownback proposed increasing taxes on liquor and cigarettes, slowed reductions in the income tax and changed the way money was distributed to public schools.</p> <p>But the governor’s budget headaches have continued: January receipts fell \$47.2 million short of predictions, and Mr. Brownback has responded by cutting funding for public schools and higher education by a combined \$44.5 million.</p> <p>The move has education officials across the state seething. Here, the Kansas City Public School District has already endured \$45 million in lost state revenue since 2009, said Cynthia Lane, the superintendent. Mr. Brownback’s cut of 1.5 percent to public school funding statewide would amount to a loss of \$1.3 million in her district, she said.</p> <p>That comes as the state has still not paid the district \$3 million for capital expenses required under a formula intended to help poor districts. Mr. Brownback has asked legislators to change that formula, and they have proposed a bill that would reduce the district’s aid by another \$1.4 million, Ms. Lane said.</p> <p>“There is really very little room in reducing our expenditures without directly impacting students and the progress we’re making,” she said.”</p> <p>KMBC News reported in June of 2016, “Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback signed legislation to increase aid to poor school districts, an action that meets a court mandate and ends a threat that the state’s public schools might shut down.</p> <p>The bill, which takes effect Friday, increases poor districts’ state funding \$38 million for 2016-17 by diverting funds from other parts of the state budget. It also redistributes some funds from wealthier districts in line with a state Supreme Court ruling last month.</p> <p>The court said the state’s school funding system remains unfair to poor districts, despite three rounds of changes in the past three years. Lawmakers had until Thursday to make further changes, and the court had said that schools might not reopen if no action was taken.</p> <p>The measure had broad, bipartisan support when the Republican-dominated Legislature passed it last week during a two-day special session. Both legislative staffers and the</p>

	<p>Republican governor moved with unusual speed because of the deadline; some bills aren't signed until 20 days after their final passage.</p> <p>Despite the measure, Kansas faces more legal and political battles over education funding. The Supreme Court could rule early next year on a lower-court panel's decision on whether the state must increase its annual spending on schools by at least \$548 million. And Republican leaders have committed the Legislature to writing a new finance formula next year.</p> <p>The court's ruling last in June 2016 came in a lawsuit filed in 2010 by the Dodge City, Hutchinson, Wichita, and Kansas City, Kansas, school districts, whose attorneys have said they and the state's lawyers will file a joint statement telling the Supreme Court that the bill satisfies the court's demands for fairly distributed education funds.</p> <p>The bill increases aid by less than 1 percent of the more than \$4 billion a year the state already spends. But the Supreme Court has ruled repeatedly that the Kansas Constitution requires legislators to finance a suitable education for all children, whether they live in rich or poor areas.”</p>
Project Proposal	It is proposed that we explore if and how student education progress has been impacted by funding decisions made in Kansas.
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To identify funding cuts by district</li> <li>2. To explore the impacts by student population demographics</li> <li>3. To identify recommendations for future funding goals</li> </ol>
Proposed Presenters	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. KSDE Commissioner</li> <li>2. USD District Superintendents</li> <li>3. District Financial Analysts</li> <li>4. Legislative Representatives</li> <li>5. Academic Education Researchers on base aide funding, etc.</li> <li>6. Governor’s Budget Administrations</li> <li>7. Kansas Children’s Cabinet or Kansas Action for Children</li> </ol>